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PREFERENCE OF ENGLISH LANGUAGE TEACHING METHODS AND TECHNIQUES OF PROSPECTIVE TEACHERS IN KONGUMANDALAM REGION

Dr.C.Barathi¹, Mr.A.Naveen²

¹ Research Supervisor, Assistant Professor of Education, School of Education, Tamilnadu Open University, Chennai, India

² Part Time Ph.D Research Scholar, Department of Education, Manonmaniam Sundaranar University, Tirunelveli, India

Abstract

The present study is made on “Preference of English language teaching methods and techniques of prospective teachers in Kongumandalam Region”. A sample of 847 prospective teachers from 41 B.Ed colleges in Kongumandalam region who were studying English pedagogy as main subject has been selected based on simple random sampling technique. This will constitute 71.65 (847/1182) percentage of sample from the total population. A normative research method and survey technique has been adopted. The descriptive statistical analysis shows that the prospective teachers belonging to Coimbatore district had higher preference of English language teaching methods and techniques, and high personality traits and Nilgiris district had high styles of learning and thinking. The level of preference of English teaching methods and techniques, personality traits and style of learning and thinking of prospective teachers was average for the whole sample and sub-sample. The regression statistical analysis had shown that daily newspaper reading, personality traits and speaking in English were the strong predictors of preference of English language teaching methods and techniques of prospective teachers in the Kongumandalam region.

Keywords: Preference of English Language Teaching Methods and Techniques; Prospective Teachers and Kongumandalam Region.

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1. Introduction

Aim of Teaching English in India

The main aim of the English language teaching is to improve the English language ability of the student. But at the present context, the English language ability of the present young generation

is not up to the expected level to compete at the international level. Effective Teaching in English provokes excellence of learner with listening, speaking, reading and writing skills. But in reality practices, it is found that students whose second language as English is able to use English for library purposes. The students who learn to use English only as a 'library language' are less competent than the students who acquire competence in all the four skills of English language. Many young professionals who are the edges of their professional courses lack good communication skills due to lack of English proficiency as it is given due importance to learn as library subject rather than utility oriented. To the present context, English language gets very importance to the country like India as common official communication language to overcome the multi diversity language systems. There are so many problems which occur in the use of English language in higher education.

English Language Teaching Methods and Techniques

Teaching methods are "a body of methods, procedures, working concepts, rules and postulates employed in the solution of a problem or in doing something. Techniques or strategies represent a complex approach to teaching which often contains a mixture of teaching methods, utilizing a number of techniques with each method. In general method of teaching or technique is a set of methods based on the same rules and having a common aim to encourage students to use the language or involve the students in the lesson or explain the language to students who have to listen attentively. Traditional method is based largely on a reduction of the integrated process of using a foreign language into sub-sets of discrete skills and areas of knowledge. It is largely a functional procedure which focuses on skills and areas of knowledge in isolation. At the college level, very few English classes have students who are at the same level of proficiency. It has been difficult for the teachers to determine the level at which they target their English classes. Teachers who are intent on completing the prescribed lessons and preparing the students for the University exams have succeeded in getting them a pass, but they have too succeeded in making them to acquire basic skills.

The people who have proficiency in this language could access large number of jobs and also were seen holding high positions in many National and International Organizations. In the earlier days English was just like a Library language, but now that notion has changed totally. At present the challenges visible before the English language teachers in India are diverse and it is necessary for them to shape up accordingly to meet the demands of the day. The teachers should know about the various teaching practices, methods, techniques, approaches in teaching English and make of using appropriate methods to motivate the learners to develop expected skills.

Personality Traits

Personality traits are the mean to understand and predict behaviour of the individual. We often level the individuals in terms of traits e.g. he/she are sincere, honest, lazy, hard- working, rational, or logical and so on. Traits theory grew out of attempts individuals in such characteristics. It represents a systematic effort to identify and measure common personality characteristics or traits which underline and determine individual behaviour. Trait is a mode of behaviour.

Styles of Learning and Thinking

Styles of learning and thinking depends upon the cerebral dominance of an individual in retaining and processing different modes of information in his/her own style of learning and thinking. Style indicates the hemisphericity functions of the brain and students learning strategy and information processing are based on the preference of the brain area (Venkataraman, 1990). It is foremost important for the teacher to focus their attention on students favoured thinking styles before imparting the subject matter. If they fail to do so, the consequences may be serious, because the teachers may tend to confuse styles of students mind. Since the method of teaching adopted by teachers often reflects their personal thinking style, the students who have the same thinking style of the teachers are only benefited and rewarded. Otherwise the students whose styles are different do not correspond with the teacher's styles are labelled as 'Slow' or 'Backward' or 'Poor Performers'. If there is a mismatch exists between the preferred styles of the teacher and that of students, such students are frequently seen to be uninterested in the content, feel bored and reject the learning activity. Therefore, it is important for the teachers to know the students preferred styles, so that the teachers can capitalize the opportunities for students learning and make them to excel in their achievement and performance.

Rationale of the Study

It is questionable that whether the English teachers at current situation act as a midsorce for the learners to their expected level and make them to learn the English language effectively through their different teaching methods and techniques by utilising their English proficiency very well. So therefore there is a lacuna between the English proficiency of Teacher in teaching students effectively through their proficiency skills and suitable preference of different methods, approaches, and techniques in teaching English.

But a very few problematic students' achievement, poor achievers at the school level indicates that students thinking and learning style should not match between the teachers learning and thinking style which results mismatch and deviation in their achievement needs. Handling such students by the prospective teachers during their internship training for short period is highly challengeable and notable issue. So a study is intended to study about the Style of learning and thinking of prospective teachers who are doing two years of B.Ed pre-service training programme in B.Ed colleges in Kongumandalam area in Tamilnadu.

Personality and style of teaching of a teacher are two eminent factors that distinguish one teacher from another which in turn influence and shape the personality of the students. If personality and its traits are well balanced, the adjustment and sociability of the prospective teacher will also increases which in turn induce the personality of students. So, it is need to study whether the personality traits of the prospective student teachers are adequate to the present scenario.

2. Statement of the Problem

Appropriate selection of teaching methods and techniques by prospective teachers in English language teaching can reduces the burden of English language among the students and make better understanding of English thereby increasing the participation of students in learning. A good personality of the teachers also influences the personality of the students too. Styles of learning and thinking are the parameters that may helpful to the individual to feel comfortable to

the situation that faces and it is depend upon the brain dominance. Therefore it is right time to ensure whether the English language prospective student teachers have right type of personality and thinking and learning styles therefore the statement of the present problem is intended to study about “Preference of English language teaching methods and techniques of prospective teachers in Kongumandalam Region”

3. Operational Definition of the Terms

The definitions used in the study along with their operational definitions are given below.

- **Preference of English Language Teaching Methods and Techniques:** According to the investigator, Preference of English Language Teaching Methods and Techniques are the mode of selection of suitable teaching methods and teaching techniques in teaching English by the Prospective student teachers to teach the content in the English subject.
- **Personality Traits:** According to the investigator, personality traits are particular quality of group of behaviour which characteristics the individual in a wide range of his/her activities and is fairly consistent over period of time.
- **Styles of Learning and Thinking:** According to the investigator, styles of learning and thinking are the cerebral dominance of an individual in retaining and processing different modes of information in his/her own style of learning and thinking.
- **Prospective Teachers:** According to the investigator, prospective teachers are the teachers who undergone two-year pre-service B.Ed teacher training programmes in Teacher Education Institutions in Kongumandalam region.
- **Kongumandalam Region:** According to the investigator, The Kongumandalam region consists of district Coimbatore, The Nilgiris, Tirupur, Erode, Namakkal , Salem, Karur, Dharmapuri, Krishnagiri, parts of Dindigul district in Tamilnadu, parts of Pallakad district in Kerala state, and parts of Chamrajnagar district in Karnataka State.

4. Objectives of the Study

The following are the important objectives of the present study.

- To find out the level of preference of English language teaching methods and techniques, personality traits, and styles of thinking and learning of prospective student teachers with respect to District wise in Kongumandalam region and to the whole sample.
- To find out whether there is any significant contribution of independent variables on prospective student teachers’ preference of English language teaching methods and techniques.

5. Hypotheses of the Study

The following are the important hypotheses of the present study.

- The overall level of preference of English language teaching methods and Techniques, personality traits, and styles of learning and thinking of prospective student teachers is average with respect to District wise in Kongumandalam region and to the whole sample.
- There is no significant contribution of independent variables on prospective student teachers’ preference of English language teaching methods and techniques.

6. Method and Technique of the Study

Normative method and Survey technique has been adopted for the present study.

Population and Sample

There are 202 B.Ed colleges in Kongumandalam region. From these 41 colleges has been selected randomly and the total numbers of Prospective Teachers (English Pedagogy) studying are 1182 during the academic year 2015-2017 constitute the population. From the population, the investigator selected 847 as the sample for the final study. This will constitute 71.65 (847/1182) percentage of sample from the population.

Sampling Technique

For the present study, the investigator adopted random sampling technique for the selection of colleges of education as well as selection of sample subjects.

Tools

The following research tools along with the background information have been used for collection of the data for the selected sample. 1. Preference of English Language Teaching Methods and Techniques Scale (2015) developed and standardized by the investigator, 2 Personality traits inventory developed and standardized by Sathiyagirirajan (2010), and 3. SOLAT was standardized tool constructed and validated by Torrance (1988).

Variables of the Study

The main dependent variable of the present is Preference of English language teaching methods and techniques. The primary independent variables of the study are personality traits and style of learning and thinking. The secondary independent variables of this study are certain selected background variables of the prospective teachers.

Descriptive Analysis

Descriptive analysis involves calculation of the measure of central tendencies and the measures of variability. The computed values of the mean and the standard deviation are used to describe the properties of the particular sample. Descriptive statistics is used to reduce the bulk of data into manageable size. The mean and standard deviation values of preference of English language teaching methods and techniques, personality traits and styles of learning and thinking of prospective teachers with respect to district wise were calculated and are given in Table.1.1

Table 1: Means and Standard Deviations for Preference of English Language Teaching Methods and Techniques, Personality Traits and Styles of Learning and Thinking of Prospective Teachers with respect to District wise in Kongumandalam region

S.No	District	N	Preference of English Language Teaching Methods and Techniques		Personality Traits		Styles of Learning and Thinking	
			Mean	S.D	Mean	S.D	Mean	S.D
1	Coimbatore	75	118.80	1.622	175.98	6.178	5.30	1.348
2	Nilgiris	20	86.30	0.571	152.70	14.701	5.35	1.277
3	Tirupur	100	89.46	1.167	162.95	15.847	5.24	1.250
4	Erode	105	93.52	1.253	159.96	12.696	5.24	1.267
5	Namakkal	105	97.18	0.945	160.88	9.336	5.27	1.339
6	Salem	97	100.34	0.923	165.22	11.161	5.18	1.291
7	Karur	90	103.81	1.161	164.44	11.094	5.13	1.294
8	Dharmapuri	135	109.28	2.750	168.30	10.008	5.24	1.344
9	Krishnagiri	120	82.53	2.094	167.07	7.868	5.08	1.274

It is clear from Table 1 that among the total nine districts in the Kongumandalam region, the prospective teachers belonging to Coimbatore district (118.80) have higher preference of English language teaching methods and techniques, and Krishnagiri district prospective teachers (82.53) have lower preference of English language teaching methods and techniques; the prospective teachers belonging to Coimbatore district (175.98) have high personality traits and Nilgiris district prospective teachers (152.70) have low personality traits; and the prospective teachers belonging to Nilgiris district (5.35) have high styles of learning and thinking and Krishnagiri district prospective teachers (5.08) have low styles of learning and thinking.

Level of Preference of English Language Teaching Methods and other Variables in Kongumandalam Region

The level of Preference of English language teaching methods and techniques, personality traits and style of learning and thinking scores obtained by the subjects were analyzed. The means and standard deviations of the whole sample and different groups are presented in Table 1.2

Table 2: Mean and Standard Deviation Scores for Preference of English Language Teaching Methods and Techniques, Personality Traits, and Style of Learning and Thinking of Prospective Teachers of the Whole sample

Sl.No	Main Variables	N	Mean	SD	Level
1	Preference of English Language Teaching Methods and Techniques	847	099.56	10.372	Average
2	Personality Traits	847	165.06	12.957	Average
3	Style of Learning and Thinking	847	005.22	1.296	Average

From the above Table 2, it is inferred that the preference of English language teaching methods and techniques, personality traits and style of learning and thinking of prospective teachers is average.

Contribution of Independent Variables on Preference of English Language Teaching Methods and Techniques of Prospective Teachers:

The multiple regression analysis has been applied to find out the significant contribution of background variables on Preference of English language Teaching Methods and Techniques and the results are presented in Table 1.3, 1.4, and 1.5.

Table 3: Model Summary for Contribution of Independent Variables on Preference of English Language Teaching Methods and Techniques of Prospective teachers

Model	R	R square	Adjusted R square	Std. Error of the estimate
1	0.782 ^a	0.612	0.611	6.467
2	0.835 ^b	0.697	0.696	5.719
3	0.840 ^c	0.706	0.7005	5.633
a. Predictors: (Constant), Daily News Paper Reading				
b. Predictors: (Constant), Daily News Paper Reading, and Personality Traits				
c. Predictors: (Constant), Daily News Paper Reading, Personality Traits, and Speaking in English.				

Dependent variable: Preference of English Language Teaching Methods and Techniques

Table 3 shows the R square values, which are found to be 0.612, 0.697, and 0.706. It is evident from the Table.4.31, 61.2 % of the total variance in preference of English language teaching methods and techniques is attributed by the daily newspaper reading of prospective teachers. 69.7 % of the total variance in preference of English language teaching methods and techniques is attributed by the combination of daily newspaper reading and personality traits of prospective teachers, and 70.6 % of the total variance in preference of English language teaching methods and techniques is attributed by the combination of daily newspaper reading, personality traits, and speaking in English of prospective teachers.

Table 4: ANOVA for Contribution of Independent Variables on Preference of English Language Teaching Methods and Techniques of Prospective Teachers

Model	Sum of squares	Df	Mean square	F	Level of Significance
Regression	55673.006	1	55673.006	1331.12	S at 0.01 level
Residual	35341.365	845	41.824		
Total	91014.371	846			
Regression	63407.053	2	31703.526	969.228	S at 0.01 level
Residual	27607.318	844	32.710		
Total	91014.371	846			
Regression	64270.033	3	21423.344	675.279	S at 0.01 level
Residual	26744.338	843	31.725		
Total	91014.371	846			

Dependent variable: Preference of English Language Teaching Methods and Techniques

It is evident from the Table 1.4 that the F values are found to be 1331.12, 969.228, and 675.279 which are significant at 0.01 level. It indicates that there is a significant contribution of daily newspaper reading, personality traits and speaking in English on dependent variable preference of English language teaching methods and techniques of prospective teachers.

Table 5: Relationship between Independent Variables on Preference of English language Teaching Methods and Techniques of Prospective Teachers

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t- value	Significant
1		B	Std. Error	Beta		
	(Constant)	76.272	0.676		112.833	S
	Daily Newspaper Reading,	18.489	0.507	0.782	36.485	S
2	(Constant)	88.617	1.001		88.532	S
	Daily Newspaper Reading,	16.781	0.462	0.710	36.342	S
	Personality traits	-8.928	0.581	-0.300	-15.377	S
3	(Constant)	91.415	1.122		81.450	S
	Daily Newspaper Reading,	17.084	0.458	0.723	37.266	S
	Personality traits	-8.973	0.572	-0.302	-15.690	S
	Speaking in English	-2.042	0.391	-0.098	-5.216	S

S –Significant at 0.01 level

The Table 1.5 shows the 't' value for independent variables. It reveals that the variables daily newspaper reading (t-value=112.833), combination of daily newspaper reading (t-value=36.342) and Personality Traits (t-value=15.377), and combination of daily newspaper reading (t-value=36.342), Personality Traits (t-value=15.377), and Speaking in English (t-value=5.216) are significant at 0.01 levels and shows higher correlation values. Therefore it is evident that daily newspaper reading, personality traits and speaking in English are significantly contributed to the dependent variable preference of English language teaching methods and techniques. The other variables are not significantly contributed to the dependent variable preference of English language teaching methods and techniques.

To sum up, the following conclusion has been reached in respect of the hypothesis: There is a significant contribution of daily newspaper reading, personality traits and speaking in English to the dependent variable preference of English language teaching methods and techniques

7. Discussions

One of the main finding of the present study is that the *overall level of preference of English language teaching methods and techniques of prospective teachers is found as average*. In consonance to the present finding in the case of Indian study, Ajith Jaya (2009) found that the *perception of teachers teaching English with respect to method of teaching was moderate*.

It is inferred from the present study that the *gender have no influence over the personality traits*. But it is found against the findings in the case of abroad study of Muhammad Irfan Arif (2012) found that *there was a significant difference between male and female prospective teachers on their personality traits*.

It is inferred from the present study that the level of style of learning and thinking of prospective teachers to the whole group is found as average. The similar findings should be found in the case of Indian study of Seetharaman and Rajasekar (2014) found that the style of learning and thinking was average in entire sample of B.Ed student teachers.

8. Implications

Students of higher education are facing many problems towards English language as they feel fear in learning and speaking English and not having good command over four skills of English language. Students are not able to read some difficult words properly while reading any passage, newspapers or text. It is appropriate time to overcome all those difficulties. Mostly in developing countries, more importance to be given to professional subjects rather than language subject likes English. In our school education system, English subject is given less priority and even the same condition too reflects in higher education.

By using traditional methods, maximum portion of class time will be wasted in exercises and drilling, dealing with grammar and pronunciation which takes away a large portion of class time. These methods were mostly used to develop basic skills of language learning such as Listening, Speaking, Reading, and Writing, but by following these methods listening and speaking skills were neglected as students cannot put their language in practice. In the era of competitive world, where the majority of the students are attempting higher competitive exams, good listening and speaking skills become an absolute necessity. Communicative approach was totally neglected by teachers and learners which has become a global demand where students are supposed to communicate across the globe and for their communicative sustained.

Even though teaching English language is based on the situational aspect and resource availability, learners expectations and language ability, need and demand supply of human resources for language teachers employability, more and more risks to be taken to handle and train the prospective teachers to select modern teaching methods and techniques rather than traditional have been needed. Availability of more financial resources, high expertise and trained teachers, more time for preparation, creativity, available of infrastructure like language laboratories, cooperation of management and other stake holders related to teacher training institutions are the challenging issues to be given more importance to develop preference of English language teaching methods and techniques.

9. Conclusion

The quality of language teaching will only improve if the prospective teachers use the best available methods and techniques in English for appropriate teaching content. Daily newspaper reading, personality traits and speaking in English are the good predictors of preference of English teaching methods and techniques. But the preference of English teaching and techniques

of the prospective teachers is average. So it is the need of the hour to realise the innate ability and try to improve the existing soft skills so that it reflects in overt behaviour. The different teaching methods, approaches and techniques that have emerged in the last 60 or so years, while often having very different characteristics in terms of goals, assumptions about how a second language is learned, and preferred teaching techniques, have in common the belief that if language learning is to be improved, it will come about through changes and improvements in teaching methodology. This notion has been reinforced by professional organization like teacher training institutions that endorse particular teaching methods, techniques and approaches, by academics who support some and reject others, by publishers who produce and sell textbooks based on the latest teaching methods, techniques and approaches, and by teachers who are constantly looking for the "best" method of teaching a language.

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